

**WYCOMBE** Wanderers reverted to their old bad habits on Tuesday night when they made heavy weather of beating Milton Keynes in the Shaw and Kilburn Floodlight League at Loakes Park.

On paper this looked a good opportunity for the Blues to get among the goals but although they were clearly the superior side, poor finishing and a certain lack of interest let them down. In the end they had to be satisfied with two scores, from Mick Holifield and Derek Harris, which gave them their third successive victory in this new competition.

But Wycombe paid a heavy price for their victory. Holifield limped in the second half after sustaining an ankle injury in a late challenge by a Milton Keynes player and is certain to miss tomorrow's (Saturday) game at Maidenhead. Although the ankle was badly swollen, it is hoped Mick will be fit for their more important F.A. Cup visit to Minehead.

Unfortunately there were too many tackles flying around, Harris in particular suffering many knocks from the two visiting centre backs. In the end referee Gerry Taylor produced his notebook to take the name of Graham Wears for a dangerous late tackle on Bob Davies.

After their emphatic 3-0 victory at Aylesbury last week in the Floodlight League, Wanderers fans must have been hoping to see a repeat performance against a side third bottom in the Southern League Division 1 North. But although Wycombe scored an early goal they fell away into mediocrity and failed to find the net again until the 83rd minute.

Too many passes went astray and some players hung on to the ball far too long. This destroyed the teamwork of the side and allowed the visitors to break up attacks repeatedly, mainly through an efficient offside trap.

One man who showed the way to overcome those tactics was full-back Bob Davies, one of

## Wycombe Wanderers 2, Milton Keynes 0 REPORT BY STUART EARP

several players testing injuries on the night. Bob made two marvellous breaks and was most unlucky not to get on the scoresheet.

It was Davies who made the first goal after eight minutes. Howard Kennedy's pass along the flank looked too long but Davies caught the ball on the bye-line and sent over a glorious cross. Holifield rose to head home, beating Milton Keynes' small goalkeeper Brian Robinson with something to spare.

It looked a promising start but despite the threat of Holifield and some good work by Kennedy, Wanderers were unable to break through. Several times they worked their way into the box only to see the final pass go astray.

Worst miss of the night, however, was by Kennedy after

39 minutes. Dylan Evans was held as he was about to shoot in the area and a penalty was awarded. Kennedy took the spot kick and ballooned the ball high over the crossbar.

At the other end goalkeeper John Maskell's main worry was keeping warm. Milton Keynes rarely ventured out of their own half and had only one worthwhile shot at goal when Jim Low drove just wide of an upright — close enough to send Maskell full length.

The second half followed a similar pattern to the first with Milton Keynes working hard for the first 20 minutes without threatening and then running out of steam. Wycombe had several chances to go further ahead, notably when Holifield broke clean through but allowed Robinson to whip the ball off his toes.

Davies took on the defence to beat the offside trap soon

afterwards but his shot flew wide. Holifield's injury came two minutes later.

As Wanderers became too casual they failed to assert their obvious authority, although there were flashes of skill occasionally, like Farouk Quraishi's volley straight from a corner which flew over the crossbar.

Wanderers eventually hit the target again in the 83rd minute. This was a lovely goal with the ball being played through to Kennedy who cleverly back heeled a pass to Harris. Derek, who hasn't scored since October 5 when he bagged a brace at Hitchin, tucked the ball home first time.

**WYCOMBE:** J. Maskell; R. Davies, R. Strong, A. Phillips, S. Vass; H. Kennedy, J. Priestley, F. Quraishi; D. Evans, D. Harris, M. Holifield (sub: P. Birdseye 64 mins). Sub: K. Mead (not used).

**MILTON KEYNES:** B. Robinson; C. Forrester, G. Wears, W. Blundell, C. Bluck; J. Low, G. O'Dell (sub: F. Harper 45 mins), B. Savage, C. Campbell (sub: S. Waller 69 mins); G. Collier, W. Staggs.

**Referee:** G. Taylor (High Wycombe). **Half-time:** 1-0. **Goalscorers:** Holifield (8), Harris (83).

**Attendance:** 250.

## Minehead tickets

GROUND tickets for Wycombe Wanderers' visit to Minehead in the first round of the F.A. Cup on November 26 will be on sale at Loakes Park on Sunday.

There is a programme fare at 11 a.m. in the clubhouse and the tickets will be available from that time until 11.30 to club members. Non members can buy tickets after 11.30. Only 100 tickets are available.

Wycombe supporters travelling by coach to Minehead can obtain their coach tickets on

Sunday morning. The tickets, priced £3 for adults and £2 for children, will also go on sale on Tuesday and Thursday from 7.9 p.m. at the bottom tea bar at Loakes Park.

Two Wycombe officials — Brian Lee and John Goldsworthy — watched Minehead on Saturday when they beat Dartford 3-1 at their Irnham Road ground. The three goals came from Minehead's forward line — Derek Bryant, Andy Leitch and Jim Jenkins —

who scored 96 goals between them last season when they finished runners-up in the South League Premier Division.

A crowd of only 356 watched the match although this was mainly due to the weather which was so bad that the players had to be called off for five minutes due to sleet.

Wanderers, who have reached the second round of the Cup for the last five years, are travelling down on Friday night in preparation for the game.

## Steve for Bahrain

**STEVE VASS**, Wycombe Wanderers' defender, is leaving the club next month to take up an £8,000 a year coaching post in Bahrain.

Vass, who joined the club this season, is one of eight young men who have been invited by the Bahrain football authorities to coach football at all levels throughout the country. It will be a two-year post and the salary is tax free.

At 23, Steve is the youngest of those selected and it will be his job to develop soccer at schools, clubs and also the national team. He

was selected a week ago when he received a telephone call from Allan Wade, the F.A. Director of Coaching inviting him to go for an interview. He passed this successfully and will leave for the post on January 1.

For the moment, Steve does not know the other seven coaches but there is a possibility that Derek Cotterill, a former Wycombe player, may also be going.

The two players met when Vass went on tour to Italy with the Blues at the end of last season. He joined the club last season and has shared the left back spot with Bob Davies.

Steve's early career began with Hincley Athletic in the West Midlands League and from there he went to Loughborough College. After touring with Wanderers he went for a month's trial at Manchester City which was extended a further two weeks.

Said Steve: "Obviously this is an ideal opportunity for me. I have been working at Ercol Furniture but hadn't decided on a career so I'm thoroughly looking forward to the venture."

"I'll be sorry to leave Wycombe but if there's a chance, I'll be straight back when I return from Bahrain."

**MICK** Holifield, an ever present in the Wycombe Wanderers side, is almost certain to miss tomorrow's (Saturday) visit to local rivals Maidenhead United in the first round of the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup.

Holifield has a badly swollen ankle after Tuesday's game against Milton Keynes and manager John Reardon will not want to take any risks in view of next week's F.A. Cup tie at Minehead.

With Holifield out of the running, Tony Horseman may return to the side up front for what will probably be a difficult game for the Blues.

Maidenhead, in the doldrums for the last two years, have been enjoying a vastly improved season. They are currently sixth in Division One of the Isthmian League. Geoff Anthony, the former Wanderers winger and Welsh international, must take some of the credit for United's improvement. Geoff is player-coach at York Road.

He is hoping to be able to play tomorrow after a five week lay off with torn ankle ligaments. Geoff is, in fact, Maidenhead's top goalscorer, hitting eight goals in the 12 games before his injury.

In the Maidenhead side are goalkeeper Ian Bath, who toured with Wycombe last season, Mick Chatterton, the ex-Slough forward, Stephen Read, son of Wanderers' physio Ken, and Brian Blackburn, a former Flackwell Heath defender.

Geoff Anthony feels confident that on their day, United could spring a surprise but added: "Much will depend on Wycombe's attitude."